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*Further Advice to the Clergy of the  
Diocess of Lincoln, by James Lord  
Bishop of Lincoln, occasioned by a  
Circular Letter of His Grace the Lord  
Arch-Bishop of Canterbury to the  
Bishops of his Province concerning the  
late Act against Popery.*

**I**N *April 1699.* I received a Circular Letter from his Grace the Lord Arch-Bishop of *Canterbury* to be communicated to the Clergy of this Diocess. In Obedience to which I took the opportunity of Communicating the said Letter, by the several Arch-Deacons in their respective Visitations at that time approaching and I believe it was communicated accordingly, and hope not without good effect, so that I did not think it necessary to repeat it now in my *Triennial* Visitation, nor to add any *further Advice* to that which I sent to you in a Printed Paper before my *Primary* Visitation: But having received another Letter lately from his Grace, by the Right Reverend Father in God, the Lord

A Bishop

Bishop of *London*, Dean of the Episcopal College, bearing Date *May 11, 1700.* I think it my Duty now, not only to communicate the Contents of this last *Letter* from his Grace, but also to remind you of the former *Letter*, which is not yet unreasonable, being written upon occasion of the sensible growth of  *vice and Prophanity.* To the opposing of which, His Grace has directed the Bishops, who are especially concerned to have an eye to such *Immoralities*, to warn the Clergy under their respective Cares, of those bold attempts upon our Holy Religion, to excite them to a diligence proportionable to the *danger*, and to suggest such *Methods* as are most likely to work a general *Reformation.* I shall not now repeat any of those *Methods* proposed, only acquaint such as have been instituted into *Living*s, or admitted into *Curacies* since, that I have taken care that out of a Supernumerary Stock, which was transmitted to me, they may now be provided of that *Letter.*

This last *Letter* was occasioned by the late Act, Intituled, *An Act for the further preventing the Growth of Popery,* which, as His Grace observes, was extorted by the provoking Behaviour of divers of the Members of that Church, concerning which there were several *Letters* from several Parts of the Kingdom to Members of both Houses of Parliament, and an *Abstract* of many of them drawn up and Published: By which it appears how boldly they affronted the Government, their *Priests*, and *Bishops* also, appearing Publickly with great numbers, and exercising their respective Functions as publickly as if they were under the Protection of the Law,

Law, and stood upon an equal foot with the Clergy of the *Established Church*. This gave occasion to the bringing in of a *Bill*, which to those who were not sensible of the high *Presumptions* and *Provocations* of that Party did seem something rigorous; But it was concluded that nothing less could *restrain* them, and notwithstanding the new *Penalties*, which seemed at first to offend, there was as great a *Tenderness* used as was *consistent with the Preservation of our Religion, our Laws, and the Publick Peace*; there being a door of Favour opened for all such as shall imbrace the Protestant Faith, by which it is manifest (as his Grace adds) that *His Majesty and the two Houses did principally intend, not their Punishment but their Conversion*.

And that they may be capable of that Favour, it is to be wished that the Gentlemen, and others of that *Perswasion* would deliver themselves from those heavy and slavish Fetters which are laid upon them by their Governing Party, and assert the *Liberty* which they, together with all other Christians, have, of reading the *Holy Scriptures* and Books of Controversie, as well on the Protestant side as on the other; especially such as were written in the *late Reign*, when their most Celebrated Champions came over on purpose to oppose and challenge the Protestant Clergy.

In such an Age of *Light and Knowledge*, it seems strange, that any Men, especially those of Parts and generous *Education* should not open their Eyes, and disdain to be kept, like Madmen in the dark, under a pretence of securing them from doing themselves a mischief.



If they would please to indulge themselves a freer Liberty of *Conversation* with the *Clergy* of the Church of *England*, of good Temper, holy Lives, and as good Learning, to say no more, as any of their own Leaders, They would see cause of changing their Opinion, in many, if not in all the particulars of the *Popish Controversie*; and I make no doubt but that many, both in this, and the Neighbouring Kingdoms, are ready to give up several *Points*, and join in Communion with the Church of *England*, as their Ancestors did in the Reign of *Queen Elizabeth* till the Bull of *Pius Quintus*, if it was not for the rigorous Bigotry of the Popes Emisaries whose Interest it is to fasten them to his Chair.

Such as are not intoxicated with the Doctrines of *Supremacy* and *Infallibility*, are in a fair disposition of embracing the Protestant Cause, there being no other Fort tenable, when they have quitted the former; as it appeared at the beginning of the Reformation here, when after *Hen. 8th.* had rejected the Popes *Supremacy*, all that he could write in the behalf of other Popish Doctrines though never so Learned and Argumentative at that time, and all that he could do, though never so cruel, could not resist the progress of the *Reformation* in other Points. Their best Champions soon threw down their Armes and came over to the Protestant side, as many would do now, if they were not restrained, and imposed upon by those *Political Doctrines* which *Henry 8th.* rejected, and which other Christian Princes are now sensible ought to be rejected.

The *Ingenuous*, *Considering*, and *Conscientious* Members of the *Romish* Communion, will I hope, inquire into the  
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Controverted Doctrines, and Read, and impartially Judge of such Books as have been written upon the several Subjects on both sides. And the Clergy of the Church of England are willing and ready to discourse with them, and invite them into her Communion, as she has directed them in the 66th. Canon, to the careful observation of which his Grace in his Letter directs the Bishops to move the Clergy of their respective Diocesses. And I do hereby desire you my Brethren of this Diocess to read and practice that Canon, and not to be wanting in any assistance of this kind, either where you are invited to give it, or where on their part it may regularly and conveniently be offered. And lest you may not all of you have the Book of Canons ready at hand, I have thought fit here to insert that Canon, the Title of which is

*Recusantium conversio a Ministris sedulo elaboranda.*

“ Quilibet Minister, cui concionandi Facultas est, si quem  
 “ Papisticum Recusantem, vel Recusantes, infra suam Pa-  
 “ rochiam habuerit (dummodo per Episcopum idoneus judi-  
 “ cetur) sedulam illis subinde operam dabit, ut (si fieri pos-  
 “ sit) errantes in viam Veritatis reducat. Quod si is vel non  
 “ Concionator, vel non talis existat, tum Concionatoris idonei  
 “ operam subsidiariam (si quidem poterit) in eum finem  
 “ procurabit. Quod si non datur, Episcopo Diocesios illud  
 “ significabit, cujus erit, non modo vicino alicui Conciona-  
 “ tori aut Concionatoribus id laboris imponere, sed et ipsum  
 “ (quantum per arduas occupationes licuerit) summo studio  
 “ contendere, ut docendo, persuadendo, modisq; blandis &  
 “ benignis omnibus tum dictos Recusantes, tum omnes infra  
 “ suam Diocesin sic affectos a suis erroribus deducat.

In which *Canon* you see the Charitable Disposition of the Church of England towards *Popish Recusants*, not out of any favour to the *Doctrines* of the Church of Rome (as she has been unjustly and slanderously accused) but with a kind and Christian design to reclaim them from their *Sins*.

The *Popish Recusants* at the time of the compiling of that Body of *Canons* of which this is one, were the most considerable Party of *Dissenters*, and it is not unlikely that the *Zeal* and *Diligence* of the Ministers of that Age, pursuant to this *Canon*, had a very good effect in reducing some of them.

But since that time there are more *Recusants* of several Denominations, who were unhappily hatched in the heat of the *Great Rebellion* by *Popish Priests* and *Emisaries*, and have been managed since by their cunning and Industry, under several *Disguises*, it being their great Endeavour and Interest to keep up a *Schisme* against the Church of England.

These though not formally *Popish Recusants*, yet as *Recusants*, may be comprehended under this *Canon*, and the like method of charitable *Tenderness* may be exercised towards them which the *Canon* directs to be used towards the other, which is by *conferring* with them, *instructing*, and *persuading* them; and because many Books have been Published since the date of that *Canon*, it may not be improper to add also, directing them to such *Books* as may be useful for them to read, according to their several *Capacities*; this Age (God be thanked) being replenished with many such, as well of *Argument* and *Controversie*, as of *Devotion* and *Prædise*; so  
that,



that, if possible, not onely *popish Recusants*, but *Recusants*, and *Dissenters* of all kinds may be *reclaimed* from their Errors, *convinced* of their Schism, *edified* in the pure and wholesome *Doctrine*, and United in the holy and solemn *Worship* of the Church of England.

I need not mention particular Books to you, many of them are well known, easy to be procured, and not very chargeable : onely it is fitt I should informe you of *one*, which his Grace, in a *Postscript* to his Letter, mentions, intituled *An Address to those of the Roman Communion in England*, occasioned by the late *Act*, written at his Graces Request.

We may hope for good Success in your Endeavours, by Gods Blessing, in performing this part of your *Ministry* towards those that differ from us ; and the rather, because the Clergy are more able, and better *assisted* for this performance now, than some of those were that lived in the Age when this *Canon* was penned ; some then being *instituted* into Livings who were not allowed to *Preach* ; which, (to make an observation by the by) shews the Opinion of the Members of that *Convocation*, which compiled that *Book of Canons*, and of that Learned Prince, *King James* the first, who not only *assented* to, but also *ratified* and *confirmed* the same, That *Institution* alone does not give sufficient Authority to *Preach*, without particular *Licence* from the *Bishop*, whatever notion some Men may have to the contrary.

Canon. 45.  
and 46.

All that I shall add more is to desire you to joyn with me *daily* in that Prayer, which we have offered up to God this *Emberweek*. That he would give his Grace to all  
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*those who are called to any office and administration in the Church, and so replenish us with the truth of his Doctrine, and endue us with innocency of Life that we may faithfully serve before Him to the Glory of his great Name, and the Benefit of His Holy Church.*

Duckdon, May 25,  
1700.

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**I** Take this opportunity of acquainting you, That since it is expected by my Lord Arch-Bishop of Canterbury and the Lord Chancellor, or Lord Keeper, That the Bishops should Certify them of the Character of such Persons who Petition for Dispensations to hold two Livings, together with the Names, real value and distance of the Livings; it is but reasonable, that the Bishops should expect, and I do expect and require of all such in this Diocess, that they do give me Notice of their intention, to make Application to me for such a purpose a Month before, expressing the Names of the Livings, Rectories, or Vicarages, the Values and distance, into the Truth of which I may then have time to inquire, otherwise I cannot with a good Conscience Certifie in such Form as is Directed.

F I N I S.



